



CITY OF CARSON

Legislation Text

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Report to Mayor and City Council

Tuesday, February 07, 2017

Discussion

SUBJECT:

FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION 17-015 SUPPORTING LOS ANGELES COUNTY BALLOT MEASURE H - HELP END HOMELESSNESS LISTED ON THE MARCH 7, 2017 BALLOT (CITY COUNCIL)

I. SUMMARY

During the January 24, 2017, City Council meeting this item was continued and the Council requested additional information on whether Measure H would provide funding to assist the cities in implementing their homelessness programs.

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors has placed Measure H on the March 7, 2017 election. It would provide for an increase of one-fourth of one per cent in the County sales tax, with the proceeds dedicated to fund programs and services to combat homelessness. Funds generated from Carson would total \$6 million annually. The City Council is being requested to approve a resolution supporting the passage of Measure H, with the request that the Board of Supervisors develop a grant program for the cities.

II. RECOMMENDATION

TAKE the following actions:

1. REQUEST that the Board of Supervisor implement a grant program for local government to assist in funding municipal homeless programs
2. WAIVE further reading and ADOPT Resolution No. 17-015, A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CARSON, CALIFORNIA, SUPPORTING BALLOT MEASURE H AND THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY PLAN TO PREVENT AND COMBAT HOMELESSNESS
3. DIRECT staff to transmit an executed copy of the resolution to Denny Zane, Executive Director of Move LA.

1.

III. ALTERNATIVES

TAKE no action on the matter.

IV. BACKGROUND

In the fall of 2015, Los Angeles County commissioned a regional Homeless Initiative in an effort to create a comprehensive, coordinated plan to combat homelessness throughout the County. Homelessness is a major problem countywide and impacts the City of Carson. A significant number of the homeless are veterans and homeless families with children. There is also a significant number of “homeless” in the County that are living in vehicles, creating impacts on surrounding neighborhoods.

The Homeless Initiative held 18 policy summits between October 2015 and January 2016, bringing together frontline stakeholders from 30 city governments (including Carson), 25 Los Angeles County departments, and more than 100 community organizations. This process resulted in a plan consisting of 47 strategies, including 13 in which cities could have a role in partnering with the County to combat homelessness. A major component of the plan is to provide resources and an outreach team to assist our sheriff deputies when responding to incidents involving homeless individuals.

The comprehensive homelessness plan was approved by the County Board of Supervisors on February 9, 2016. The City of Carson has been an active participant in the program, relying on the expertise of the South Bay Council of Governments and PATH. One of our recent successful programs was held at Dominguez Park, involving several non-profit and church groups in providing sanitation, clothes, food, housing assistance and medical services to the local homeless population. However, the City has limited funds in which to participate in the assisting the homeless.

The major obstacle to putting these strategies into action is funding. In response to the Countywide homelessness plan, the Board of Supervisors allocated approximately \$100 million in one-time funding. However, the unmet need for homelessness services has been projected to be \$450 million per year, not including construction and other capital costs. To address this gap, a ballot measure has been proposed for consideration at the March 7, 2017 election calling for an increase of one-fourth of one per cent in the County sales tax, with the revenues (projected to be \$350 million per year over a ten-year period) to be dedicated to fund services in the areas of rental subsidies, housing development, physical and mental health care, job training, and other related supportive services.

Local Funding Program in Measure H

The City devotes substantial resources, both in funding and staffing, to combat homelessness in Carson. The LASCD reports that significant homeless population is found in the area of UCLA Harbor General Hospital and these homeless individuals cross into Carson. The problem is both regional and local. The City participates in the South Bay Council of Governments Program and has formed a Homeless Task Force, consisting of City staff, LACSD, PATH and other service providers in our region. The Task Force meets monthly to review homeless issues and to implement programs, including the health and wellness program recently concluded. It is important to note that should Measure H be approved, that \$6 million in new sales tax revenues would be generated from Carson annually.

City staff contacted the County staff to request information on whether the Ordinance would contain direct payments to the cities. The County staff indicated that it would not, but the Board would approve Expenditure Guidelines for the various strategies and “cities may be eligible to apply for

funding out of the amount allocated for individual strategies.” (E-mail from Phil Ansell, January 25, 2017)

The Ordinance contains no provision for direct payments to the cities, similar to a “local return” program. However, the Ordinance appears to have the flexibility to allow the Board of Supervisors to provide direct payments to the cities “to address the causes and effects of homelessness.” Section 4.73.040(C) (Expenditure Plan) provides that “Revenues from the retail transactions and use tax **may be awarded as grants to public agencies** and non-profits to address the causes and effects of homelessness, consent with this Chapter.” The Board is to adopt policies and procedure for solicitation and award of the grants. It appears that at this time, that priority is not being given to the cities in the Expenditure Guidelines.

The intent of Measure H is to implement the six strategic areas found in the County’s Homeless Initiative. The Initiative discusses “opportunities for cities to combat homelessness,” but is unclear if Measure H funds will be used for these programs. Appendix C from the Initiative outlines several “key city opportunities,” such as

- Homeless Prevention Program for Families
- Subsidized Housing for Disabled Individuals
- Partnering on Rapid Rehousing
- Bridge Housing
- Housing Choice Vouchers for Permanent Supportive Housing
- Increase Employment for Homeless Adults
- First Responder Training
- Enhancement to Emergency Shelters

Staff believes it is important to support Measure H, however the Expenditure Guidelines should contain a provision for grant funding for the cities. It is unrealistic to consider that Cities can continue to fund homeless programs through their General Funds, especially with the loss of redevelopment agency funds to the County and the potential new tax measure that voters expect will be used by their local communities to solve homeless issues.

V. FISCAL IMPACT

It is estimated that the City is expending \$100,000 annually in staff resources and direct payments to implement our homeless programs.

VI. EXHIBITS

1. Resolution No. 17-015. (pgs. 4-5)
2. Measure H Fact Sheet (pgs. 6-7)
3. Securing Dedicated Revenue to Combat Homelessness Across Los Angeles County (January 18, 2017 Presentation by Phil Ansell, Director of Los Angeles County Homeless Initiative) (pgs. 8-16)

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